

# DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

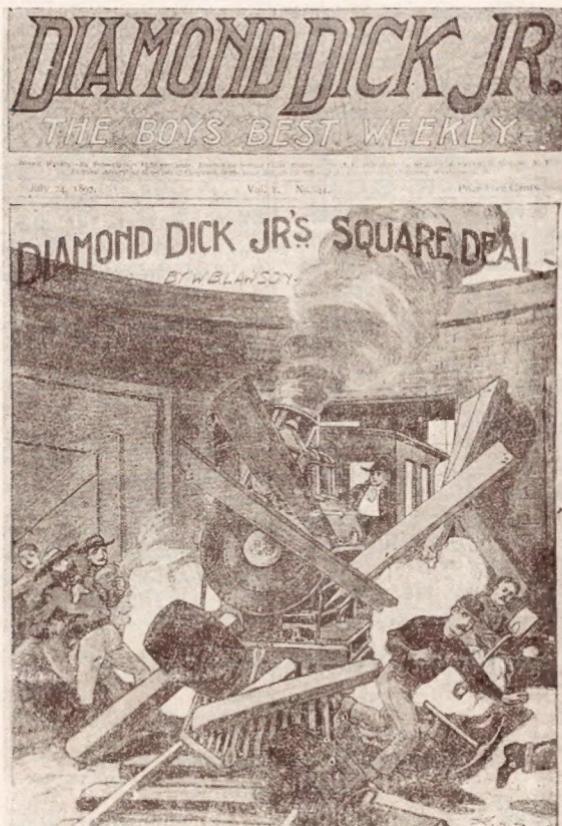


A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

Vol. 28 No. 8

Aug. 15, 1960

Whole No. 335



## DIME NOVEL SKETCHES #15

### DIAMOND DICK, JR.

Published by Street & Smith. 762 issues, Oct. 17, 1896 to May 20, 1911. Colored covers, 7x10½, 32 pages. With No. 239 size increased to 8x11. It was preceded by the black and white Diamond Dick Library which was preceded by the New York 5c Library. A few of the series were reprinted in the Great Western Library published in the 1920's.

## THE CREATOR OF DIAMOND DICK

By J. Edward Leithead

Who was the author of the first Diamond Dick tale? That first story was the New York Weekly serial, beginning April 8, 1878, and running for seven issues, entitled, "Diamond Dick, or, The Sarpint of Siskiyou County. A Romance of Arizona." By Delta Calaveras. I have always believed the writer using that pseudonym was Robert Russell, but I understand that it was also used by Will B. Schwartz. Did Schwartz author the original Diamond Dick stories? Pen names were sometimes switched from one writer to another by dime novel publishers, for instance, the pseudonym "W. B. Lawson," used by several. William Wallace Cook, although he wrote numerous Diamond Dick stories, did so after the famous Western character had been started on his long career. As every dime novel collector knows there were two of the Dicks, Richard and Bertrand Wade, and the son Bertie outlasted his father by many seasons. I'm still of the opinion that Robert Russell was "Delta Calaveras" in the case of the earliest Diamond Dicks and offer as proof this item from Happy Hours Magazine, Sept.-Oct. 1930 issue:

"Walter Winchell, in his column,

'On Broadway,' in the April 28 (1930) issue of 'The Daily Mirror' (a New York morning paper) said: 'Robert Russell, creator of Diamond Dick, still writes that sort of stuff in his Graybar building den.'

Of course, there was a real Diamond Dick, the famous frontiersman Richard J. Tanner, born in the vicinity of Taylorville, Illinois, on Nov. 29, 1869. Was Richard Tanner the original of the character about whose Western adventures Street & Smith published so many novels? The Tanners left Illinois for Nebraska in 1878, and it is a strange coincidence that in the same year the first Diamond Dick tale was published. But Richard Tanner was then but 8 or 9 years old. He had not yet been given the sobriquet of "Diamond Dick."

One other character invented by Robert Russell for that original Diamond Dick story was Handsome Harry. And the red-bearded, roaring giant, "the Ol' Sarpint o' Siskiyou," proved even longer-lived than the "father-and-son" combination, for Harry was with the elder Diamond Dick before Bertie Wade appeared, considerably later, as a small boy in an issue of Nugget Library #17, Dashing Diamond Dick, this time by Russell under the W. B. Lawson pseudonym. Handsome Harry then attached himself to Diamond Dick, Jr. and was by his side when the last Diamond Dick Weekly story, #762.

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was issued in 1911.

As some proof of Handsome Harry's importance, the second of the Diamond Dick series was called "Silver Mask, or, The Sarpint of Siskiyou"; was, of course, by Russell although signed "Delta Calaveras," and Harry was chief character, with Diamond Dick getting scarcely any attention, even appearing incog. as "Del Norte." Years afterward, George C. Jenks experimented with a run of Handsome Harry tales in Diamond Dick, Jr. Weekly, but it lasted only 15 issues, then young Diamond Dick was put back in the saddle.

To return to Richard Tanner, he had an avid interest in Western marksmen and he evidently believed that practice makes perfect, for, at the age of 16; he was good enough at handling revolver and rifle to hire out to a Wild West show. He was, in fact, very good.

Richard Tanner was in show business long enough to gain a widespread fame as a crackshot. One of his close friends was Deadwood Dick (Richard W. Clark) and they both were employed by the Wells Fargo Express Co. An article about them, with photographs, was published in Street & Smith's True Western Story magazine for August 1926.

Just how Richard Tanner became nicknamed "Diamond Dick" is not known to me. The "Diamond Dick" of the Street & Smith novels owned a gem-studded vest which gave him that appellation. He seldom wore it, however, preferring a costume that was at least semi-Mexican, making him appear like a California ranchero, not at all the American cattleman, mine owner and railroad magnate that he really was. This was, I think, partly a hangover from the Beadle woodcuts; many of their American characters in dress (unless scouts in buckskin or U. S. cavalrymen) showed the Spanish influence of early Far West days.

Bertie, or Diamond Dick, Jr., appears in the earliest novels in a modified version of this Spanish style at-

tire, but when George C. Jenks came to write of him he was transmuted into "scout, cowboy and U. S. Marshal" with white Stetson, red or blue flannel shirt, neckerchief, fringed buckskin chaps, silver-spurred boots and gauntlets. I liked him best that way, but they were all good stories except some not so good toward the end of Diamond Dick, Jr. Weekly when William Wallace Cook was carrying too heavy a load of writing. Three characters that Jenks created were Billy Doo, the tough Chicago kid who was Dick's kid pard, Belle Bellair, Dick's girl pard, and Jack Sinn, gambler, "that Pale Man from Oregon," who was Dick's relentless enemy, yet, curiously enough, a crook whose word, once given, could be relied on.

I know a traveling salesman who wanted to become a doctor, and he accomplished the feat although he was well beyond the age when most of those who plan a medical career enter college. "Diamond Dick" Tanner himself was about thirty when he hung up his guns and saddle to enter the Nebraska Medical College at Lincoln. But at the end of the four-year course he could sign "M. D." after his name, and he hung out his shingle in Norfolk, Nebraska. This was in 1910. A picture of Dr. Tanner in later years, taken in a buckskin suit and sombrero, with hair worn long, mustache and goatee, shows him to have belonged to that handsome and picturesque frontier fraternity to which Buffalo Bill Cody, Wild Bill Hickok and Captain Jack Crawford belonged. Not that the doctor wore these habiliments while gathering a clientele. The truth is, he kept the fact that he was the famous "Diamond Dick" in the background for fifteen years or so; and then, during a rodeo held in Norfolk in 1925, he made a dramatic reappearance as "Diamond Dick" Tanner, sombreroed, buckskin-clad, heeled with six-shooters and Winchester.

Dr. Tanner made a record-breaking horseback ride in May 1898 and wrote

an article describing it for Happy Hours Magazine, Jan.-Feb. 1929 issue, "Diamond Dick's Tiger Hunt." The tiger was one that had got away from a train wreck of the Walter L. Main circus. "The Death of Wild Bill" was another article by Dr. Tanner, in the form of a letter to Brother Bob Smeltzer (Happy Hours Magazine Jan.-Feb. 1926). He did a short piece, "Calamity Jane, Deadshot" for Happy Hours 1927 Annual, and may have written more for the paper that I have missed, but at any rate Bob Smeltzer corresponded with him quite a bit and induced the real Diamond Dick to become a H. H. Brotherhood member.

In June, 1927, there was a grand roundup of old-timers at Norfolk, Nebraska (which may aptly be called Diamond Dick's town, just as North Platte, Nebraska, was Buffalo Bill's town). Present were Major Gordon W. Lillie (Pawnee Bill), Col. Luke North (whose brother, Major Frank North, commanded the Pawnee Battalion which defended the Union Pacific workmen from Indian raids), Doc W. F. Carver, the Champion Shot and known to the Indians as "The Evil Spirit of the Plains," Deadwood Dick (Richard W. Clark), Col. Idaho Bill Pearson and last but not least, Dr. Richard J. Tanner (Diamond Dick). What a gathering of genuine frontiersmen, almost the last of their kind if not the last. I hope, and I believe, although I have no detailed account of the meeting, that they wore their buckskins and big hats. And all or nearly all of them, "long-hairs" of the old Indian-fighting breed! It was the last such reunion for these celebrated frontiersmen, as all were well along in years. But they left their mark on the West, that will last beyond the time when pony and wheel tracks have faded out.

So, while I would like to say that Dr. Tanner was the "Diamond Dick" of the paperbacks, that his exploits first inspired Robert Russell to introduce him as a dime novel hero, obviously he was too young and un-

known except locally in the year 1878 when the first Diamond Dick story was printed. His adventures while employed by Wells Fargo might have furnished material for some of the later stories.

In all, Robert Russell authored some 25 Diamond Dick stories (Richard Wade was 25 years old when introduced in the serial) between 1878 and 1890. He brought Diamond Dick, Jr. to life (wrote about 7 Diamond Dick, Jr. tales) before he quit the series. Three able writers took it from there, T. W. Hanshew (briefly, perhaps), Thos. C. Harbaugh and William Wallace Cook. I'm inclined to think Cook did those excellent railroad and mining stories which featured the Diamond Dicks and Handsome Harry, for Cook, like W. Bert Foster, could write with an authoritative note on almost any subject covered by dime noveldom, as witness the diversity of some paperback book-lengths he wrote outside of the routine weekly novels for Street & Smith's then large army of young readers (and some not so young)—"Thorndyke of the 'Bonita,'" "A Round Trip to the Year 2009," "The Gold Gleaners," "Marooned in 1492," "Running the Signal," "A Deep Sea Game," "Jim Dexter, Cattleman," "Castaway at the Pole," "The Sheriff of Broken Bow."

I think my favorite of Diamond Dick authors was George C. Jenkins, who started with #430, Handsome Harry's Hard Fight, of the then very popular 5c weekly (maybe you wonder, as I do, how any publisher could put out a 32-page magazine with color cover for 5 cents and make a profit). Jenkins caused a bit of a stir. He made Handsome Harry the hero of the fifteen stories referred to elsewhere, dropped old Diamond Dick, brought in Billy Doo, and later Jack Sinn, the sardonic top-hatted gambler and dainty Belle Bellair (I was in love with her myself). He did quite a few stories with a circus background and did them well, for he had been a circus publicity man at one time.

The End

## WRITERS FOR GOLDEN DAYS

by Stanley A. Pachon

## No. 2—Charles H.(erbert) Heustis

Golden Days among its group of writers had names which seldom or never appeared outside its pages. Some of these names were pseudonyms while others were of writers who wrote almost exclusively for that paper. In this latter group falls the name of Charles Herbert Heustis.

Charles Herbert Heustis was born December 12, 1855, at South Acton, Mass., the son of Charles P. and Susan F. Reed Heustis. On his mother's side he was related to Edmond Faulkner, a pioneer English settler and from the house where he was born the Minute Men marched forth against the British at Concord in 1775. His father although raised on a New Hampshire farm had become a sea captain. When he was 10 years old his father took him on a voyage to Honolulu where he got three months of his schooling. The return trip around Cape Horn which took 129 days made a deep impression on his youthful mind. He then attended Grammer School in San Francisco and High School in Boston and then enrolled at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

While attending M. I. T. he did some spare time reporting for the Boston Advertiser. In 1877 he came to work, as a reporter, on the Philadelphia Times which had been started by Alexander K. McClure and Frank McLaughlin, in 1875. He rapidly became night editor and then Managing Editor.

In 1889 when James Elverson bought the Philadelphia Inquirer he engaged Heustis as Managing Editor. He held this position until 1900 when he became its editorial chief holding this position for 36 years. Heustis was regarded as one of the foremost editors of his time and was one of the first to urge the nomination of Secretary of Commerce, Herbert Hoover for the Presidency. It is said

that his editorials, which were widely copied started the boom that sent Mr. Hoover to the White House.

He held only one public office, that of Health officer for the Port of Philadelphia, a post to which he had been appointed in 1899 and held until the state quarantine system was replaced by Federal control.

Heustis was twice married, (1) to Miss Sybil C. Eldridge of Winchester, Va., in 1880 and who died in 1889 (2) To Mrs. Chestena F. Hamilton of Virginia in 1894 and who died in 1931. His step-daughter, Miss Mybel Hamilton died at his Longport, N. J. home on April 4, 1947.

As a hobby Heustis wrote serials for Golden Days. These were six in number and depict themes with which he was familiar, the newspaper field and the sea. His stories were all interesting and well written and full of interesting incidents.

In August of 1936 after almost 60 years in newspaper work he retired to his home at 5 South 26th Avenue, Longport, N. J., for a well earned rest, where after living 11 years more, he passed away after a brief illness on April 28, 1947. A son, Waldo Reed Heustis and two grandchildren survived him.

## EXCHANGE COLUMN

For Sale—50 novels all in fair to good shape, no reprints. \$25.00 takes the lot. Bob Frye, 895 Morgan Ave., Schenectady 9, N. Y.

Wanted—Any books by Arthur Lee Putnam and some Alger titles, send list. M. Teicher, 169 Blake Avenue, Brooklyn 12, N. Y.

For Sale—Vol. 1 Nos. 1 and 2—Marvel Science Stories, rare. Price \$5 per copy. George Sahr, 7001 31st St., Kenosha, Wis.

All of the wants in my June Roundup ad are still needed. Most of the items listed for trade are still available. Will sell or trade. W. R. Johnson, 416 Wheeler, Ardmore, Okla.

Classified Ads Bring Results

## NEWSY NEWS

**Ralph F. Cummings**  
161 Pleasant St.  
So. Grafton, Mass.

Herbert Kenney, a new member to our fold, says he enjoys all articles in good old Roundup, as well as the ads and what have you. He gets a big kick out of the large illustrations of novels that appear on the front covers, many of which he's never heard of. His side kick, Bill Waddle, loves anything to do with old locks and keys, and other old things. They are a pair of mighty fine fellows.

Jack Barker, an Alger collector from Atlanta, Georgia, and Bill Poage have been up to Bills, to see his fine collection. Bill says James H. Van Demark is down in Florida, and will stop on his way back to New York state in the spring, to see Bill and his collection.

Albert E. Johnson of Sacramento, Calif., says at one time he was thinking of buying a bookstore, but something came up, and he never did put it through. Some one told him that as he likes to read books, he'd never want to sell, if he had one. Well, he sure would have fun, in with the old musty, booky odor, a pressed flower inside the pages, and so forth.

Bill Burns of Rockland, Maine, says he is much better, but still he has to go back to the Portland Hospital, so as to see what they can do on his leg and hip, as they aren't healing the way they should.

Bill Claggett of Jacksonville, Fla., still has the pain in his left shoulder blade, still he says it won't stop him from reading his old favorites, such as Old and Young King Bradys, Nick Carter and other old timers. Keep up the good courage Bill, you'll find you'll win out in the end.

Ralph F. Adimare would like information on Nathan D. Urner. He sure is a whiz for writing up fine articles on the old writers of long ago.

Bill Burns writes me that A. W. Lawson of London was killed by an automobile, and most of his huge col-

lection was junked, except for the little that Denis Rogers and the British Museum got a few items. Sure is a

## BACK NUMBERS

of Reckless Ralph's Dime Novel Round-up Nos. 1 to 237 for sale.

**Ralph F. Cummings**  
161 Pleasant St., Soo. Grafton, Mass.

## ALGER SALE

Am moving west and therefore will sacrifice my Alger collection of 88 different titles in various condition—some paper covers. Will sell entire collection for \$50. Cost twice that.

Also bound June 1860 edition of first Dime Novel—Malaeska—\$5.

Eight bound volumes of complete edition of Happy Hours and Dime Novel Round-up from beginning thru 1958 for \$25.

**Howard B. Silsbee**  
47 Brass Pl. Irvington 11, N. J.

## WANTED

by C. E. Douglas  
402-28th St., Vienna, W. Va.

Beadles Dime Novels. Nos. 38, 43, 118  
216, 170.

Beadles New Dime Novels. Nos. 501,  
327, 399, 536, 61<sup>o</sup>, 567.

Beadles Standard Lib of Romance 3.

Beadles Am. Library. 21.

Beadles Boys Books of Rom. & Adv.  
No. 11, 12.

Beadles Dime Tales of Trad. & Rom.,  
etc. No. 8, 9.

Log Cabin Library. 42, 292, 223.

Log Cabin Pocket Library. No. 11.

War Library. Nos. 103, 255, 392, 43,  
184, 322, 178, 311.

Old Cap Collier. No. 337.

"Devil Anse" or, The Hatfield-McCoy  
Outlaw. Pub. by Police Gazette

Young Kate; or, The Rescue. Harper's  
1844.

Beall. The Pirate Spy.

Refugee Boys of '61.

The Lady Lieutenant.

shame, after a collector has worked all his life in getting such a collection together, and have it go like that. Makes a fellow almost shed tears to think of it.

Bill Gander has a fine "Tribute," on the passing of Herbert Leckenby, or expects to, in No. 73 of the Story Paper Collector, out very shortly. There is also a fine tribute on him in the Sexton Blake Library #441, on "An Old Friend Passes." Herb was the publisher of "The Collectors Digest," a fine British magazine on the doings, etc., of Billy Banter, Tom Merry and other heros of the penny

dreadful world. We'll all miss him a lot.

Robert Troetschel writes in that Japan issued a stamp commemorating the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the treaty of amity and commerce between the United States and Japan with an illustration from a drawing appearing in Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper.

A recent record album featuring songs from the Wyatt Earp TV program has a song entitled "Buntline Special."

### CACTUS CHARLEY ON LITERATURE

I've read a Western novel in a ten cent magazine,  
And I guess there's lots in Western life that I ain't ever seen.  
It was all about a cowboy, whose gun was set with pearl,  
And who loved a downright stunnin' type of broncho-bustin' girl.  
I know the book is Western, 'cause it speaks of chaps and spurs,  
And when the men are talkin', the word damn oft occurs,  
And there's frequent bloodshed in it, and the hero kills the most;  
And the villain's full of bullets when he yields his orn'ry ghost.  
Now, I've punched for many outfits, clear from Texas to the line,  
And I never seen such doin's as this writer tells so fine.  
But I guess truth can't be looked for when the magazines, they say,  
Has their Western fiction ground out down in Hackensack, N. J.

—Published in a Denver newspaper about fifty years ago. The author is believed to have been Arthur Chapman, who wrote the famous poem "Out Where The West Begins." —Contributed by Gerald J. McIntosh

### MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

- 240 Paul E. F. Rothenburger, 6 Park Ridge, Lisbon, N. H. (New member)
- 241 Edward G. Ingraham, 402 Brentwood Rd., Havertown, Pa. (New memb.)
- 242 Ed Levy, Pleasant Hill, Woodbridge, Conn. (New Member)
- 1 Ralph F. Cummings, 161 Pleasant St., So. Grafton, Mass. (New address)
- 243 Arthur N. Carter, 15 Cliff St., Attleboro, Mass. (New Member)

## TIP TOP BARGAIN

Must sell following numbers which are duplicates in my files and therefore a real bargain for someone: 252 271 278 279 280 283 294 296 298 299 300 303 308 321 332 357 358 359 371 375 376 377 378 381 386 389 390 395 402 478. Ten Dollars takes them all, thirty Tip Top Weeklys.

Also have Fame & Fortune originals at 50 cents each and large size reprints at 25 cents. If price was any lower handling and shipping cost would mean giving them away.

How about low numbers in Secret Service at \$1.00 each. These are a real buy and good trading material. Send me your want lists.

